

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended) A method of message delivery using a voice mail message system, comprising:

receiving from a party at said voice mail message system, a voice mail message and a category designation for said message;

storing said message in a storage area, said storage area accessed by said voice mail message system and corresponding to said category designation for said message;

retrieving messages from said storage area based on a user of said voice mail message system choosing said category designation;

presenting said messages to said user;

providing a first choice for said user to place a call to said party;

providing a second choice for said user to subscribe to future messages from said party when said message is presented to said user; [[and]]

identifying said future messages received at said message system from said party as subscribed to messages for said user, when said user chooses said second choice; and

retaining access by other users of said voice mail message system to said message after said user deletes said message which restricts further communication on said message between said user and said party, whereby subsequent retrieval of said message by said user is restricted while subsequent retrieval of said message by any of said other users is not restricted.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein choosing said category designation comprises choosing from among a listing of category designations.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said category designation is separate from designation of intended recipients of said message.
4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein presenting said message comprises presenting at least one of an audio, text and visual message.
5. (original) The method of claim 4, wherein presenting said message comprises at least one of a text-to-speech conversion and a speech-to-text conversion.
6. (canceled)
7. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, comprising providing notifications to said user when said future messages are received.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, comprising placing a call from said user to said party based on said user choosing an option to place a call when said message is presented to said user.
9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a message comprises receiving distribution parameters for said message.
10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein retrieving a message comprises matching said distribution parameters with user profile data.
11. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a message comprises receiving expiration parameters for said message.
12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein storing said message comprises deleting said message from said storage area when said expiration parameter is exceeded.
13. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein receiving a message comprises receiving distribution parameters for said message.
14. (previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein retrieving a message comprises matching said distribution parameters with user profile data.
15. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein retrieving a message comprises incrementing a counter to track a number of times said message is retrieved.

16-17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving a message comprises receiving at least one of distribution parameters and expiration parameters for said message.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein retrieving a message comprises matching said distribution parameters with user profile data.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein storing said message comprises deleting said message from said storage area when said expiration parameter is exceeded.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein retrieving a message comprises incrementing a counter to track a number of times said message is retrieved.

22. (currently amended) A method of receiving messages, comprising:

accessing a message system having a plurality of messages stored in categorized storage areas, wherein categories of said categorized storage areas are independent of intended recipients of said messages;

choosing at least one of said categories to obtain at least one chosen category;

retrieving messages from said at least one chosen category thereby obtaining retrieved messages;

incrementing counters for said retrieved messages when said retrieved messages are retrieved, each of said counters associated with one of said retrieved messages input to said message system by a party, each of said counters accessible by said party for determining a number of times said one of said retrieved messages is retrieved; [[and]]

optionally subscribing to receive future messages from said party when a user of said message system retrieves said one of said retrieved messages input by said party; and

retaining access by other users of said message system to said one of said retrieved messages after said user deletes said one of said retrieved messages which restricts further communication about said one of said retrieved messages between said user and said party, whereby subsequent retrieval of said one of said retrieved messages by said user is restricted while subsequent retrieval of said one of said retrieved messages by any of said other users is not restricted.

23. (original) The method of claim 22, comprising optionally placing a call to said party when a user of said message system retrieves one of said messages input by said party.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, comprising:

identifying said future messages input by said party as subscribed to messages for said user; and

searching each of said categories to retrieve said subscribed to messages for said user when said user chooses a subscribed to category.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, comprising:

identifying said future messages input by said party as subscribed to messages for said user;

forwarding said subscribed to messages to a personal message storage area for said user; and

retrieving said subscribed to messages from said personal message storage area when said user chooses a subscribed to category.

26. (original) The method of claim 22, wherein said message system is a voice mail system.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 26, wherein retrieving comprises:

optionally placing a call from said user to said party when a user of said message system retrieves one of said messages input by said party; and

performing, when said user chooses a subscribed to category, one of searching each of said categories to retrieve said future messages, and of forwarding said future

messages to a personal message storage area for said user for retrieval from said personal message storage area.

28. (currently amended) A voice-mail message system for providing message delivery, comprising:

an input controller configured to receive and ~~and categorize~~ voice mail messages from a subscriber to said message system and to categorize said messages to obtain categorized messages;

a plurality of categorized storage areas for storing respectively categorized messages; and

an access controller configured to receive, from a user of said message system, a selection of at least one of said categorized storage areas to obtain a selected categorized storage area, to retrieve said respectively categorized messages from said selected categorized storage area, and to present said respectively categorized messages to said user whereupon said user can optionally subscribe to receive future messages from said ~~party~~ subscriber to said message system, said access controller permitting access by other users of said message system to said respectively categorized messages after said user deletes at least one of said respectively categorized messages which restricts further communication about said at least one of said respectively categorized messages between said user and said subscriber to said message system, whereby subsequent retrieval of

said at least one of said respectively categorized messages by said user is restricted while subsequent retrieval of said at least one of said respectively categorized messages by any of said other users is not restricted.

29. (canceled)

30. (previously presented) The message system of claim 28, comprising at least one of an interactive voice response module and a dual tone multi frequency module for said input controller and said access controller.

31. (original) The message system of claim 30, comprising a user database and a subscriber database for storing profiles of said users and subscribers of said message system, respectively.

32. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to deliver voice mail messages by:

receiving a voice mail message from a party and a category designation for said message from said party;

storing said message in a storage area corresponding to said category designation for said message;



retrieving messages from said storage area based on a user selection of said category designation;

presenting said messages to said user; [[and]]

providing a choice for said user to subscribe to future messages from said party when executing said instructions for said presenting said messages to said user; and

retaining access by other users to all of said messages after said user deletes any of said messages presented to said user which restricts further communication on said any of said messages between said user and said party, whereby subsequent retrieval by said user of said any of said messages presented to said user is restricted while subsequent retrieval of said all of said messages by any of said other users is not restricted.

33. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to deliver said messages by presenting a listing of category designations for selection by said user.

34. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 32 containing instruction for controlling a computer system to deliver said messages, wherein said category designation is separate from designation of intended recipients of said messages.

35. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to deliver said messages by:

identifying said future messages received from said party as subscribed to messages for said user.

36. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 35, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to provide notifications to said user when said future messages are received.

37. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to place a call from said user to said party based on said user choosing an option to place a call when presenting said messages to said user.

38. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to:

receive distribution parameters for said message; and

match said distribution parameters with user profile data when retrieving messages.

39. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to:

receive an expiration parameter for said message; and

delete said message from said storage area when said expiration parameter is exceeded.

40. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to increment a counter for tracking a number of times said message is retrieved.

41-42. (canceled)

43. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to:

receive an expiration parameter for said message; and

delete said message from said storage area when said expiration parameter is exceeded.

44. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 32, containing instructions for controlling a computer system to increment a counter for tracking a number of times said message is retrieved.